

3. If you have not previously held a government office, what community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)

N/A

4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, and information on your campaign strategy, expected funding sources, and endorsements.

Copies of my position papers on Government Reform, Economic Development, Higher Education and Agriculture are included with this questionnaire. Additional policy papers will be released over the course of the campaign and will be posted on my website: www.voteonorato.com.

ISSUES

1. Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns?

Yes No

Campaign finance reform is the single most important reform in Pennsylvania government because it is so important to shifting the balance of power back to where it belongs: in the hands of the voters. The solution that I proposed as part of my Plan for Government Reform is to enact contribution limits (which Pennsylvania currently does not have) based on the federal limits.

2. What limitations, if any, do you think should be placed on the rights of Pennsylvania citizens (including former prisoners) to vote?

I support the current law, which generally restores voting rights to people who have committed a felony after they are released from prison.

2a. Would you support legislation allowing for a verified paper ballot receipt?

Yes No

2b. Would you support legislation providing for same day registration and unrestricted voting by absentee ballot?

Yes No

I strongly believe in maximizing voting rights in order to increase participation in elections, and we need to balance that goal with our responsibility to protect the security of the voting process. I therefore support “no excuse” absentee ballots, and I am willing to consider supporting same-day registration if we can implement it in a way that preserves ballot security.

3. Would you support any limitations, including waiting periods, on a woman’s access to abortion?

Yes No

I support Pennsylvania’s current law and will oppose and veto any changes to it.

3a. Would you support repeal of existing restrictions on a woman's right to choose?

Yes No

As noted above, I would oppose any changes to current law.

3b. Would you support any limitations on a woman’s access to contraception, including emergency contraception?

Yes No

I support a woman’s access to contraception, including emergency contraception consistent with Pennsylvania’s current regulations.

3c. If yes to either, what limitations do you support?

4. Do you believe that same-sex couples in committed relationships should have the right to marry?

___ Yes X No

I support civil unions to provide same-sex couples with the essential legal rights and responsibilities of marriage.

4a. If no, do you support the right to domestic partnership rights?

X Yes ___ No

5. Would you support legislation to limit the purchases of handguns to one a month?

See below ___ Yes ___ No

5a. What other legislation, if any, would you sponsor or support to reduce the number of handguns in circulation in Philadelphia?

I believe that we must respect the right of Pennsylvanians to own firearms and that we can still enact common-sense laws that make our communities safer and save lives. I support legislation requiring people to report when a gun has been lost or stolen, which is an important tool for the police to use for stopping “straw purchases” and in getting illegal handguns off of our streets. I also support legislation requiring that homes with minors use child safety locks or other devices that keep children from being accidentally killed by firearms. In addition, local governments should have greater authority to enact further handgun legislation that is appropriate to their local needs.

6. Would you support legislation to strengthen protection for workers trying to form or join a union?

X Yes ___ No

7. Do you favor an automatic cost-of-living adjustment to the minimum wage?

___ Yes ___ No

I believe that the best approach is to address this issue at the national level so that one state is not put at a competitive disadvantage to another, while protecting the ability of all American workers to earn a family-sustaining wage. I support periodically increasing the federal minimum wage to reflect the rising costs faced by working families.

8. What measures, if any would you support to strengthen anti-discrimination laws?

As County Executive, I signed an ordinance prohibiting discriminatory behavior in terms of employment, housing, real estate and public accommodations – including historic protections for members of the LGBT community such as the establishment of a county-level Human Relations Commission – and I would support similar legislation at the state level. I also ordered that a county wage disparity study be conducted every 5 years, requiring that the findings be used to update the county’s pay plan and propose any other necessary reforms, and I am committed to strategies to ensure that Pennsylvanians have access to economic opportunity regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity.

9. Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working for contractors of the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work?

X Yes ___ No

As described above, I pursued strategies to address equal pay for equal work as County Executive and will do so at the state level.

10. Would you support an increase in the state’s share of funding for public schools?

Yes No

I will champion continued implementation of Pennsylvania’s Costing-Out Report in order to increase student achievement and relieve the burden on local property taxes.

11. What measures would you support to guarantee access for all Pennsylvanians to quality affordable healthcare?

I am carefully following the national health care debate to gauge how it will impact Pennsylvanians. My main interest is in addressing health care affordability, access and quality – both for those who currently have health insurance and those who do not. This issue is incredibly important to preserving the middle class and to the viability of our businesses.

12. Do you believe that taxation should generally be progressive, so that people and businesses with higher incomes pay taxes at higher rates?

Yes No

I do believe that taxation should be progressive, and I believe it is possible to accomplish this within our current Constitutional framework.

12a. If yes, would you support an amendment to the state constitution allowing such taxation?

See above Yes No

12b. What other measures do you support, if any, to make PA personal and business taxes more progressive?

One of the strategies that I discuss in my Plan for Economic Development is a state earned income tax credit. I believe a state EITC can be an important strategy to help hard-working families and to encourage Pennsylvanians to join the workforce.

13. What categories of state spending do you think should be significantly increased or decreased?

As described above, I am committed to continuing implementation of Pennsylvania’s Costing-Out Report for public education. I also strongly support early childhood education, which I believe is one of the single most effective programs that government can fund. At the same time, the next Governor will face an extraordinarily difficult budget environment, and I pledge to comb through every appropriation and government program to evaluate what works and what doesn’t so that we can make investments in the programs that provide the most effective services to the public.

14. What economic development strategies for Pennsylvania and Philadelphia would you seek to encourage?

Please see my attached Plan for Economic Development.

15. Currently the state constitution mandates that revenue from the state gasoline tax be spent only on roads and bridges. Would you support an amendment allowing gas tax revenue to be spent on public transportation?

I am a strong supporter of public transportation and believe that it must be adequately funded for our metropolitan areas to thrive and to encourage smart and sustainable growth. As County Executive, I have not shied away from taking politically difficult positions to ensure public transportation funding – and I will bring that commitment to the Governor’s Office. At the same time, our highways and bridges are also desperately in need of repair, and I will not support policies that pit one valid infrastructure need against another.

16. What measures would you support to ensure that Pennsylvanians have clean air and water?

Protecting our environment is essential to our health, our quality of life and our economic vitality. I will issue my Plan for Sustainability soon, and among the issues that I will discuss are the need to extend Growing Greener and to properly fund the Department of Environmental Protection. You can find the policy paper on my website as soon as it is released.

17. What measures would you support to preserve and provide parks and green spaces?

As County Executive, I have championed green space as an important contributor to our residents' quality of life. I established the county's first Parks Foundation to raise money from the private sector to improve the parks and make them more accessible to the community, and I pledged \$10 million in capital funds as a public-sector match to encourage other contributions. In my campaign for Governor, I have set a goal of 700,000 protected acres of green space by 2015 – a two-thirds increase from current levels – and will support comprehensive land-use planning efforts. I will also discuss this issue in my forthcoming Plan for Sustainability and proposed next phase of Growing Greener.



The Onorato Plan for Agriculture

Growing Pennsylvania's Leading Industry

Agriculture is at the heart of Pennsylvania's rich heritage and as the Commonwealth's largest industry, it is also far more: a fundamental driver of our modern economy, the source of livelihood for millions of the state's residents, and essential to the food security and nutritional well-being of each of the Commonwealth's 12.5 million citizens. As Governor, Dan Onorato will protect and grow this vital sector of Pennsylvania's society and economy.

Agriculture is critical to Pennsylvania's economic growth

Dan Onorato believes that a strong agricultural policy is essential to Pennsylvania's overall financial health. Pennsylvania is fortunate to have 63,000 farms and 7.8 million acres of farmland. The Commonwealth is the third most rural state in the nation – a fact reflected in our overall economy, with 1 in 6 jobs related to agriculture and more international exports from agriculture than any other sector. Every single county in Pennsylvania except one has at least 1,000 acres of farmland, and with \$45 billion in total economic activity the Gross State Product from Pennsylvania agriculture alone nearly equals the entire economic output of Maine.

Pennsylvania's agriculture economy benefits from the expertise of the state's farmers in producing a diverse array of goods and services that are second to none in the nation. Forty percent of the Commonwealth's agriculture comes from the dairy industry – and with over 7,400 dairy farmers producing 1.2 billion gallons of milk – that industry's health is integral to the entire Agricultural Economy. Our mushroom and hardwood production are both first in the United States. And in beef, eggs and so many other products, Pennsylvania's farmers are creating jobs and selling goods that keep the nation fed. With niche and direct market exploration, technologically advanced farming practices, organic farming and agritourism, Pennsylvania farmers continue to be at the cusp of agricultural economic development.

Yet Pennsylvania's farmers are also subject to the same national recession that has hurt so many other working families in the Commonwealth, and they have seen their livelihoods damaged through no fault of their own as the country's economy spiraled downward. Ensuring the financial security of the agricultural sector is essential to Pennsylvania's economic recovery, and providing state-level leadership to help farmers succeed and grow their businesses is a fundamental building block for creating an even stronger economic future for the state.

A vision for Pennsylvania's future

Dan Onorato will pursue state policies that support the growth and development of Pennsylvania farmers by providing them with the tools, support and services they need to grow their businesses. As Governor, Onorato will:

1. Recognize the essential contributions of farmers to Pennsylvania's economy and society by ensuring adequate support for farmers and farming;
2. Increase the profitability of farming to protect and expand its role in the economy;
3. Help farmers benefit from the emerging alternative energy economy; and
4. Provide farmers with the tools and support they need to continue their leadership in addressing environmental concerns.

Through these strategies, Pennsylvania's farmers will be a driving force behind the state's economic expansion.

Ensuring adequate support for farmers and agriculture issues in the state budget and policy-making process

Farmers make an essential contribution to Pennsylvania's economy and society, and the Commonwealth's taxpayers receive an enormous return on investment for every dollar spent on the agricultural sector. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Restore the significant cuts made to the Department of Agriculture to ensure that it can accomplish its important mission.** Pennsylvania's agriculture budget was cut by 11% this year, sending the Department of Agriculture back six years in its level of state support. As the economy recovers, Dan Onorato will make filling this gap a priority in order to protect the agricultural economy and the well-being of all Pennsylvanians.
- **Create the conditions necessary for farmers to succeed.** In addition to overall financial backing for the Department of Agriculture, Onorato supports a number of targeted investments, statutory changes and state policies to boost the agricultural economy:
 - *Protecting farmers from skyrocketing property taxes.* As Allegheny County Executive, Onorato led the fight against a reassessment that threatened a back-door tax hike on homeowners. As Governor, he will push for a statewide solution that protects homeowners and farmers from onerous property tax increases.
 - *Increasing the resources available in the First Industries Fund.* This program provides grants, loans and loan guarantees to help farmers build their businesses and invest in machinery and equipment upgrades. Onorato will ensure that it has the resources it needs to support the Agricultural Economy's growth.
 - *Ensuring adequate funding for animal health and the Animal Health Commission.* All Pennsylvanians rely on the ability of the state's efforts to protect animal health and to coordinate diagnostic and research functions to quickly identify and remediate any threats to animal health, which can otherwise lead to human health risks in the food supply. With the grand opening of the newest investment in animal health – the BSL3 Lab – in March 2010, providing support to this line in the Department of Agriculture's budget is critical to keeping Pennsylvania at the forefront for animal health and bioterrorism response and surveillance.
 - *Providing leadership on controlling and eradicating plant diseases and pests.* Just as investments in animal health protect Pennsylvanian, so do funding and leadership for research and outreach efforts that can identify threats to plant and

animal life. After 10 years and millions of dollars, and through cooperation between state, federal and local partners, Pennsylvania eradicated plum pox disease. Onorato will continue support for similar efforts with emerald ash borer and invasive species such as feral swine. These efforts ensure public confidence in agricultural production and avoid economic threats to farmers from unforeseen events.

- *Continue to invest in agriculture research.* The Agricultural Research appropriation to Penn State University is a key investment in promoting the economic well-being of Pennsylvania farmers, and Onorato supports its continuation and, if possible, expansion.
- *Preserving confidence in food safety by strengthening food safety laws.* To avoid food-borne illnesses, Onorato supports strengthening the state's food safety laws by standardizing inspections and reporting and by improving enforcement for food safety regulations at restaurants, based on legislation already working its way through the General Assembly. Onorato will also create a single integrated Digital Health Department to give consumers access to food safety reports under the jurisdiction of the state as well as county and local governments. In addition, Onorato will advocate for food safety changes at the federal level that protect Pennsylvania consumers.
- **Protect the viability of family farms as farmers retire.** The average age of a principal farm operator in Pennsylvania is 55 years old, and more than 30% of Pennsylvania farmers are at least 65. Maintaining the rich tradition – and economic necessity – of family farms will require state leadership. Onorato supports:
 - *Continuing the efforts of the Center for Farm Transitions.* This important program provides legacy planning and technical assistance for the next generation of farmers. Onorato will support the Center as well as the machinery and equipment funding programs that are often necessary to promote successful inter-generational farm transitions.
 - *Expanding efforts to attract youth into farming.* Onorato will support the work of 4-H and the FFA. He will also emphasize agricultural education programs beginning in the early grades and including strong Career & Technical Education programs in high schools.
- **Fight hunger while supporting Pennsylvania farms.** Food banks across Pennsylvania are seeing double-digit increases in demand because of the terrible economy, and Onorato will take the following steps to provide relief for struggling families facing food insecurity until the economy recovers:
 - Increase funding for the State Food Purchase Program, which provides direct aid in purchasing food to 1,800 food banks, soup kitchens and supporting agencies;
 - Increase marketing, add more farmers and provide card readers, training and financial support for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, a federal initiative that provides low-income families and older adults access to fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs at local farmers markets; and
 - Support the Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit, which many farmers use to make contributions to food banks. In addition, Onorato supports a targeted temporary increase in this tax credit to encourage economic recovery.

- **Provide support for Pennsylvania’s 117 county and community fairs.** These fairs attract nearly 6 million visitors each year and require assistance from the state in order to remain viable.

Increasing the profitability of farming to protect and expand its role in the economy

Pennsylvania has a responsibility to its farmers during this national recession as well as a long-term commitment to agricultural economic development as a major component of the state’s overall economic growth plan. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Recognize the severe problems facing dairy farmers and seek solutions.**
 Pennsylvania’s dairy farms and associated dairy businesses generate more than \$7 billion in economic activity each year and are responsible for over 40,000 jobs. Onorato believes that a threat to the dairy industry is a threat to Pennsylvania’s economy, and he will:
 - *Advocate on behalf of Pennsylvania dairy producers for federal dairy policy that supports their needs.* Onorato understands that the federal government is the primary driver of dairy profitability, and he and his Cabinet members will advocate for appropriate federal support.
 - *Continue and expand the work of the Center for Dairy Excellence and Center for Beef Excellence.* Onorato will focus in particular on increasing the Centers’ business education and management training initiatives in order to help dairy farmers succeed in a changing business environment.
 - *Work with the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board to assist dairy farmers.* Onorato will encourage changes in current practice so that more dairy producers receive the over-order premium on Class I milk.
 - *Encourage the use of risk management tools.* Onorato will increase technical assistance and education to assist farmers in making use of risk management tools, and he will advocate at the federal level for their expansion.
- **Develop local and regional food systems that connect farmers to the marketplace.**
 Onorato will spearhead a regional foodshed development strategy that includes:
 - *Creating a Center for Regional Agricultural Economies in the Department of Agriculture.* The Center will provide leadership and technical analysis to identify foodshed regions where goods can be produced, processed and then procured, and will help farmers connect with and market to small, mid-sized and large purchasers within their region.
 - *Providing financial incentives for schools to buy local farm goods.* In addition to expanding the Farm-to-School Initiative, Onorato will increase the state’s reimbursement rate for schools that buy fresh local farm goods in their foodshed region as part of their breakfast and lunch programs.
 - *Supporting the Pennsylvania Preferred Campaign.* PA Preferred is a successful branding and marketing initiative, and Onorato will support it and seek its enactment into law to ensure its continuation.
- **Support farms that wish to become certified organic.** While still representing a small segment of the market, organic farming has increased dramatically in Pennsylvania and now represents over \$58 million in annual sales and 45,000 production acres. Pennsylvania is one of the top 10 states in the nation for organic farming, which some

farmers have used as a pathway to higher profitability. Onorato will provide technical assistance for farms that are becoming organic.

- **Increase export opportunities for Pennsylvania farmers.** Onorato will provide international business development assistance so that Pennsylvania farmers can better capitalize on export opportunities – where the Commonwealth’s agricultural sector already has a competitive advantage. Onorato will ensure that agricultural exports are a priority for the Department of Community & Economic Development’s Office of International Business Development and that the state is providing leadership to improve coordination among the many organizations and state and federal agencies involved in agricultural export efforts.
- **Provide support for the hardwoods industry.** Onorato will support adequate funding for the Hardwoods Research & Promotion appropriation in the state budget.
- **Encourage agritourism as a strategy for increasing profitability.** Along with agriculture, tourism is Pennsylvania’s top industry – and Onorato will encourage synergies between the two economic drivers. Onorato will:
 - Help agricultural businesses like wineries connect with ecotourism marketing efforts in rural areas and as part of the PA Wilds economic development initiative
 - Strengthen technical assistance and marketing support for small rural businesses that can be part of regional agritourism development strategies
 - Use the Center for Farm Transitions to provide technical and financial support for farmers transitioning into agritourism as part of legacy planning efforts
 - Assist the horse and harness racing industry in marketing and other strategies to attract visitors to racetracks

Helping farmers benefit from the emerging alternative energy economy

Expanding Pennsylvania’s role in “green” alternative energy production is a core component of Dan Onorato’s economic development and job creation strategies. Pennsylvania farmers will play a major role in using the alternative energy economy to spur statewide economic growth. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Fix the Clean and Green law.** Onorato supports Clean and Green as a strategy for farmland preservation, and he believes that the law can and must simultaneously encourage the use and production of alternative energy. Onorato supports legislation that limits the roll-back of the Clean and Green benefits to those portions of the land that would be used for energy production, as long as the remainder of the farmland is still being preserved.
- **Help farmers drive down their costs while generating alternative energy.** Onorato will spearhead a comprehensive strategy to save farmers money on their utility bills through increased alternative energy production and incentives for conservation. As part of this strategy, Onorato will:
 - *Ensure access to Energy Harvest Grants and solar grants.* Onorato will ensure that farmers have access to adequate grants that assist in implementing alternative energy production, and that the permitting process is efficient in order to protect the environment while enabling projects to move forward.
 - *Support the use of the PAgrows Program for alternative energy development.* Onorato supports this initiative to provide farmers with access to the necessary capital to make alternative energy projects financially feasible.

- *Encourage the development of community digesters to serve small and family farms.* Onorato will provide start-up funds for regional digesters that convert manure to methane gas – protecting the environment while generating energy that is sold to earn money for farmers.
- **Support research on cellulosic ethanol.** Onorato’s Higher Education Policy Paper includes a proposal for a \$25 million state competitive grant pool to serve as a matching fund for federal research grants – with a focus on energy and other emerging sectors of the economy. These resources can help develop strategies for cost-effective conversion of non-food products into ethanol, which if economically competitive, would provide another means of alternative energy production for Pennsylvania farmers.

Providing farmers with the tools and support they need to address environmental concerns

Pennsylvania farmers have long been at the forefront of environmental issues. Dan Onorato will provide the support farmers need so that Pennsylvania can achieve essential goals including clean water while ensuring the economic success of the Commonwealth’s farms. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Seek additional federal funding and technical assistance in meeting requirements under the federal government’s Chesapeake Bay programs.** Onorato will advocate for clear and predictable expectations for Pennsylvania farmers and adequate federal funding and technical assistance to support their conservation efforts. In addition, Onorato supports maintaining the state as the primary entity for regulation and enforcement of Pennsylvania’s watershed implementation plan as long as the state is meeting its commitments.
- **Support state funding and tax credits to farmers for implementing conservation practices that help meet federal requirements.** Onorato supports the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) tax credit to provide incentives for best management practices as well as nutrient trading programs that reduce the amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment using market forces to reward farmers who are exceeding the requirements while providing a benefit to entire communities.
- **Preserve additional farmland and open space across Pennsylvania.** Onorato will set a goal of 700,000 acres covered by 2015 – a two-thirds increase – and will support comprehensive land-use planning efforts.
- **Encourage agricultural practices that promote clean water.** Onorato will aim to double the number of acres in Pennsylvania with nutrient management plans, cover crops and no-till planting through the use of technical support and financial incentives. Onorato also supports direct funding for technical assistance to farmers in the design, planning and implementation of conservation practices, including nutrient management.
- **Continue to evaluate the implementation of ACRE.** Onorato will ensure that the Agriculture, Communities & Rural Environment (ACRE) Act continues to effectively balance agricultural, environmental and local land-use interests.

DAN ONORATO: SUPPORTING THE AGRICULTURE ECONOMY IN CREATING AND PRESERVING PENNSYLVANIA JOBS

Dan Onorato will champion the needs and interests of Pennsylvania’s farmers. Onorato’s policies will recognize the contributions of the Commonwealth’s agricultural community to the state’s economy, culture and environmental protection, and he will work hard to ensure that the best days for Pennsylvania farmers always lie ahead.



The Onorato Plan for Economic Development

*Making Pennsylvania the Leader in Next-Generation Jobs &
Helping Our Core Industries Thrive*

The single most important job for the next Governor is to spur Pennsylvania to lead the nation in job creation and business vitality. Dan Onorato will get the economy back on track and create a climate where businesses can succeed – including our historic manufacturing sector through the newest pioneers in the emerging Green economy. As Governor, Onorato's chief focus will be on creating well-paying sustainable jobs that improve the economic security of all of the Commonwealth's residents – just as he has done as Allegheny County Executive.

Pennsylvania's diverse economy has the potential for unbridled growth. Nearly \$1 out of every \$6 of the state's total private-sector economic activity comes from the manufacturing sector – still the largest component of the economy. At the same time, Pennsylvania has built a competitive advantage in key segments of the Knowledge Economy, including through its unrivaled “eds and meds” – higher education institutions and medical institutions – and through its burgeoning science- and technology-related fields. And perhaps no sector holds greater opportunity for the Commonwealth than energy, with intense competition for alternative and renewable energy and energy conservation strategies, combined with Pennsylvania's vast holdings across the broad range of energy sources – including the enormous economic potential of the Marcellus shale natural gas reserves that lie just under the Commonwealth's surface.

A similar variety is found in the make-up of Pennsylvania's companies. The largest 2% of Pennsylvania businesses employ the majority of the state's workers – but in recent years small businesses have been responsible for creating far more jobs than big companies, and the largest increases in business owners has been among women-owned and minority-owned firms. Small firms are in many cases the proving ground for innovation and entrepreneurship, and create more than half of the nation's private-sector economic activity and over 60% of net new jobs.

Dan Onorato understands that Pennsylvania is hurting as the national recession strikes working families from one end of the Commonwealth to the other. Lost jobs and lower wages have been the recent hallmark of so many communities across the country, as these tough times have forced terrible circumstances on many Pennsylvanians. This perilous recession demands that the next Governor enter office with a record of economic development and a commitment to making the difficult decisions that will grow Pennsylvania's economy and create sustainable next-generation jobs that will bring confidence and security to the state's hard-working residents.

A Proven Track Record

Dan Onorato is the only candidate for Governor who knows what it takes to turn around a large economy – because he has done it. After six years of his leadership, today Allegheny County has more jobs than any other county in Pennsylvania and the county’s unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the state and over 2 percentage points lower than the nation’s.

As Executive of Pennsylvania’s second-largest county, Onorato spearheaded the transformation of the region’s economy and the promotion of smart and sustainable growth: attracting new jobs, helping existing businesses grow and making Western Pennsylvania a leader in the Green economy. Onorato reclaimed and restored 1,500 acres of brownfields, eliminating blight and turning them into shovel-ready sites that could be used for economic development. He worked with his community college to create a landmark Green Institute to train workers for well-paying high-demand jobs. He capitalized on Southwestern Pennsylvania’s rich manufacturing history to match employers and workers in advanced manufacturing jobs in the development of wind and solar energy components that are integral to America’s long-term quest for energy independence. And he recognized that wage gaps and employment discrimination are direct threats to the economic well-being of the entire Commonwealth, and used his Executive authority to promote equity in economic opportunity.

A Vision for Pennsylvania’s Future

Pennsylvania’s economic growth will be the unquestioned focus of an Onorato Administration. Under the Onorato Plan for Economic Development, Pennsylvania will:

1. Establish a climate where businesses can succeed;
2. Launch a “Grow Your Own” success strategy to help firms start, expand and prosper;
3. Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation;
4. Boost export opportunities for Pennsylvania companies and attract foreign companies to the state; and
5. Ensure that Pennsylvania’s workforce is prepared for and able to access high-skill, well-paying jobs.

Establishing a climate where businesses can succeed

Having a competitive business environment is a prerequisite for strong and sustainable economic growth. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Make Pennsylvania’s business tax structure competitive.** Pennsylvania’s corporate income tax rate is currently the second-highest in the nation. While many companies do not pay this tax, the high rate is a red flag that discourages companies from building their future here with Pennsylvania workers. Onorato will call for comprehensive business tax reform that puts in law a 4-year plan to accomplish the following goals:
 - Reducing the Corporate Net Income Tax (CNIT) from 9.99% to 7.99% or lower;
 - Eliminating the current cap on net operating losses for the CNIT;
 - Ensuring that the weighting of the sales factor in the CNIT calculation encourages more businesses to grow their Pennsylvania workforce and their manufacturing and production operations;
 - Identifying business tax changes to fully pay for these reforms to the CNIT so that the tax burden is not shifted to Pennsylvania’s working families; and
 - Finishing the phase-out of the Capital Stock & Franchise Tax, a tax which particularly punishes Pennsylvania manufacturers.

- **Establish efficiency, predictability and transparency in the regulatory environment.** Pennsylvania must ensure that environmental and other standards are always upheld by businesses, and at the same time the state must do a better job providing timely responses to companies that seek permits and other regulatory approvals. Onorato will:
 - Ensure that state government agencies with these business regulatory functions have adequate staffing to responsibly and efficiently respond to permitting applications and other required approvals;
 - Set clear and public benchmarks for the amount of time the permitting process should take; and
 - Require public reporting from all state, regional and local agencies on actual permitting timeliness.
- **Provide relief from skyrocketing electricity costs.** Pennsylvania businesses and residents could face untenable electric rate increases as current caps expire. Rate caps ended for about a quarter of Pennsylvania consumers at the end of December, and the remaining 60% of businesses and homes will see their rate caps end on the last day of 2010. Onorato hopes that this issue is addressed in the current session of the General Assembly in order to ease the transition to a fully competitive electricity market – and if not, he will do so immediately upon taking office. Onorato supports:
 - Limits on the amount that rates can increase over a 3-year phase-in period following the end of caps in any region of the state;
 - Strategies that assist and enable companies to enter into long-term purchasing agreements with predictable rates;
 - Encouraging bulk energy purchasing, including the use of regional authorities and other entities to help small businesses aggregate their purchasing power; and
 - Pursuing demand-side strategies for industrial and manufacturing firms in order to reduce their energy bills, including conservation and off-peak usage.
- **Improve the roads, bridges, highways and other infrastructure that commerce relies on.** Pennsylvania’s economic success is dependent on a strong infrastructure, and the Commonwealth’s current needs far outnumber available resources. Onorato will improve Pennsylvania’s infrastructure by ensuring adequate state funding, being an advocate for greater federal funding and pursuing public-private partnerships and other innovative funding approaches.
- **Ensure that there are shovel-ready sites available for business location and expansion.** Just as Onorato used brownfield rehabilitation as a strategy for both community and economic development in Allegheny County, so will he continue efforts to clean up brownfields and old industrial sites across the state and return them to productive use. Onorato will use site development, along with infrastructure investment, as part of a strategy to encourage smart, sustainable growth.
- **Improve accountability and transparency in Pennsylvania’s economic development programs.** Pennsylvania’s economic development programs provide critical assistance for business attraction, growth and retention. Onorato will ensure that these programs have the financial resources to encourage economic growth, and he will improve their accountability and transparency by:
 - Eliminating WAMs in the state budget, as described in Onorato’s Government Reform Policy Paper, in order to improve confidence in community and economic development investments;

- Establishing clear standards – and making them public – for how the state makes economic development investment decisions;
- Publishing an annual report to the General Assembly and the public that details all forms of state spending on economic development, including direct funding for business assistance and workforce development as well as tax credits, to show their impact by industry sector and geographic region;
- Upgrade the state’s “Investment Tracker” Internet database so that the public can easily access information about actual job creation, wages and benefits; industry sectors; and location (to determine whether a project assists older communities or encourages sprawl) for all economic development investments; and
- Establish an ombudsperson in the Department of Community & Economic Development to link women- and minority-owned businesses to the state’s economic development programs and funding sources.

Launching a “Grow Your Own” success strategy to help firms start, expand and prosper in targeted sectors

Pennsylvania’s economic development strategy should focus on the establishment and expansion of companies in key occupational clusters that can constitute a competitive advantage for each region of the state. This policy will move Pennsylvania to the forefront in creating high-tech jobs in the Green and knowledge-based economies while building on our existing strengths in manufacturing, education, life sciences and other sectors. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Spearhead a new focus on Pennsylvania’s new and fast-growing firms.** To encourage Green company development and growth in other emerging sectors, Onorato will:
 - *Help new businesses invest in their own growth.* Onorato will create a tax incentive that enables small high-growth companies to retain more of their initial earnings to be used as a reinvestment in working capital through a tradable tax credit or exemption. The size and scope of this High-Growth Investment Tax Incentive will be based on economic conditions and be developed in partnership with industry and workforce stakeholders.
 - *Ensure access to working capital.* Onorato will partner with lending institutions to help make loans available to new and growing companies. This strategy will include a focus on community financial institutions and outreach in order to reach the minority- and women-owned businesses that represent a sizeable share of new company owners.
 - *Encourage the next generation of manufacturing success.* As Pennsylvania’s role in energy continues to expand, so will the opportunities for firms that develop and produce components in alternative energy production and energy conservation strategies – such as wind and solar components, Green buildings, grid management and battery technology. Just as Onorato worked to bring a plant to Allegheny County that will manufacture glass and mirrors for solar panels, he will increase Pennsylvania’s focus on the supply chains for the energy economy. This strategy is particularly important to meeting Onorato’s goal of ensuring that Pennsylvania workers and businesses benefit from the Marcellus shale natural gas reserves along with other opportunities in the energy sector.

- *Provide support to help businesses grow.* Onorato will collaborate with economic development agencies and other partners that work directly with businesses to create individualized growth plans and then link those businesses to state and other funding sources in order to finance the growth strategies. Adequate funding for Small Business Development Centers and economic development organizations is essential to achieving this goal. In addition, Onorato will engage local Chambers of Commerce in identifying and convening firms in need of assistance.
- *Provide access to technical assistance for management and administrative skills.* Fast-growing companies often face unique management challenges as they move from a 2- or 3-person operation to one that is 10 or 20 times larger in size. Onorato will ensure access to technical assistance in helping firms plan for and overcome this hurdle, working with the Small Business Development Centers and other partners. This technical assistance will include training on establishing an inclusive environment for employees based on corporate best practices – a capacity that is especially important since workforce experts predict that women will constitute the vast majority of employee growth in the first half of this decade, with an 8% increase in the labor force.
- *Expand the use of business coaches who can provide expertise in targeted fields.* Onorato will expand the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program, known as PennTAP, which hires experienced industry experts to work as business coaches with interested companies.
- **Encourage the in-state growth of companies headquartered outside of Pennsylvania in targeted New Economy sectors.** Onorato will launch a Domestic Business Outreach Program to mirror the state’s international effort with companies whose headquarters is located outside Pennsylvania and who have branches in the state, designed to encourage their next phases of growth to be in Pennsylvania.
- **Promote the economic success of rural Pennsylvania.** Onorato recognizes rural Pennsylvania as an essential component of the state’s economic development capacity and opportunity – both in and beyond the vast Agricultural Economy. While rural Pennsylvania will benefit from all of the policy proposals in this paper, Onorato recognizes that rural areas also have unique needs and he commits to meeting them, such as through specific infrastructure investments including greater broadband deployment. The Onorato Policy Papers on Higher Education and Agriculture also describe targeted economic development strategies for rural Pennsylvania.
- **Help small businesses as they prepare for inter-generational transfers.** As the first of the Baby Boom generation retires, many small family-owned businesses in manufacturing and other targeted sectors will be preparing to be passed down to the next generation of entrepreneurs. Onorato will work with the Industrial Resource Centers to provide legacy planning so that these businesses have access to technical assistance and state programs such as equipment upgrades in order to promote their continued viability.

Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation

In order to become the leader in business creation, Pennsylvania must also become pre-eminent in the formation of *new ideas* that can lead to economic growth. Pennsylvania was responsible for 3% of the nation's Green technology patents from 2006 to 2008 and ranks 6th in "clean-tech" venture capital – and the Commonwealth must continue to improve in order to become the national leader in emerging economic sectors. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Increase venture capital investment in Green companies and other emerging sectors.** Onorato will prudently increase the state's venture capital investment in Pennsylvania companies to spur Green and other high-tech innovation. He will also support and expand the Pennsylvania Angel Network that links early stage capital to innovative new companies.
- **Create a pilot micro-lending initiative.** Pennsylvania's world-class higher education institutions boast some of the nation's most talented future entrepreneurs, and Onorato will fuel their growth while deepening their Pennsylvania roots. This initiative will make small loans to budding entrepreneurs and link them to New Economy companies already in the state.
- **Establish Regional Centers on Innovation and Entrepreneurship.** Onorato will encourage business accelerator centers formed through regional partnerships of higher education institutions and other partners that focus on targeted economic sectors.
- **Implement an aggressive strategy to transform research into new jobs.** As described in his Higher Education Policy Paper, Onorato supports:
 - *Creating and protecting jobs by encouraging industry-sponsored research.* Onorato will set a target to establish a \$25 million per year competitive funding pool within four years to serve as a match for industry-sponsored research at public and private Pennsylvania colleges and universities. This initiative will improve the competitiveness of Pennsylvania firms – with an emphasis on manufacturing jobs – and address the emerging needs of Marcellus shale development.
 - *Strengthening entrepreneurship at research institutions.* Onorato will create the "Pennsylvania 100": 100 Entrepreneurs-in-Residence in the most promising research labs in the Commonwealth, with the aim of doubling the number of university-based start-ups in Pennsylvania. He will also ensure that these start-ups access the technical assistance of the state-funded Regional Export Networks in order to help achieve their export potential.
 - *Increasing support for Ben Franklin Partners and the Greenhouses.* These organizations have been essential partners of state government in working with new start-up businesses in critical sectors of the economy, and Onorato supports their growth.
 - *Encouraging university spin-offs by supporting access to capital.* Onorato will work with the higher education and business communities to ensure that the Small Business First loan program meets the working capital needs of start-ups and early stage companies being created as spin-offs from colleges and universities.
 - *Supporting the growth of new companies through the Research & Development Tax Credit.* To provide financial incentives for new technology-based companies, Onorato supports restoration of the temporary cuts to the Research & Development Tax Credit that were enacted as part of the FY2009-10 budget, if possible based on economic conditions.

Boosting export opportunities for Pennsylvania companies and attracting more foreign companies to the state

Although Pennsylvania businesses have been among the nation's leaders in increasing their international exports, the state still stands among the bottom-third in the nation for exports as a percent of total economic activity. This represents an opportunity for economic growth, and Onorato will champion the export potential of Pennsylvania companies – as well as expand the investment of foreign companies' growth in Pennsylvania. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Expand international business development in energy and other key sectors.** Onorato will expand the state's international business development assistance to attract exports and foreign direct investment – combining the work of multiple state agencies where possible – to focus on the energy sector, agriculture, technology companies and other markets where Pennsylvania is highly competitive.
- **Help manufacturing companies reach international markets.** Onorato will increase the state's emphasis on providing outreach and technical assistance to manufacturing companies through a targeted strategy tailored to the manufacturing strengths of each region and including assistance in the development of production services that can be marketed overseas.
- **Establish an export presence in additional emerging global markets.** Onorato will open new export offices in countries that show an opportunity to dramatically increase export opportunities for Pennsylvania companies.
- **Increase the role of Pennsylvania's ports in the state's economic development strategy.** Onorato will link Pennsylvania port marketing into business attraction and incentive packages in order to drive down logistic costs to make the state more competitive and to take advantage of the Commonwealth's location advantage.
- **Encourage additional international flights.** International flights provide a critical link between Pennsylvania companies and their overseas markets and for international businesses seeking to launch operations here with Pennsylvania workers. Onorato will analyze where there are needs for additional international flights and provide leadership and incentives to fill gaps.
- **Use arts and cultural events to attract foreign direct investment.** Pennsylvania's wealth of arts, cultural and sports excellence can serve as a magnet to attract international investment to the Commonwealth, as evidenced through the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's recent tour of Asia. Onorato will work to synthesize these strengths with economic development opportunities.

Ensuring that Pennsylvania's workforce is prepared for and able to access high-skill, well-paying jobs

Economic development depends on a well-trained, highly skilled workforce. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Provide immediate economic relief to struggling families.** For Pennsylvanians suffering from the recession, the highest priority is employment. Onorato will create a temporary tax rebate program for businesses that hire unemployed workers or new entrants to the labor force. The tax rebate program will only apply to permanent jobs that offer a family-sustaining wage and will include incentives for positions that include health care. The rebate will phase out as the economy recovers.

- **Focus on emerging and high-growth sectors of the economy.** Onorato will ensure that Pennsylvania’s workforce development system continues to adapt to meet the needs of high-priority and emerging occupations and to establish new career pathways, including by:
 - *Focusing on workforce opportunities in the Green economy.* Current labor market projections anticipate significant growth in “Green collar” jobs in energy-related occupations, weatherization and related fields. Onorato will ensure that the workforce development system prepares Pennsylvanians to benefit from this long-term economic opportunity.
 - *Creating a Marcellus Shale Workforce Development Blueprint.* Onorato will convene industry, labor, environmental and community leaders to ensure that Pennsylvanians have access to and are well-positioned for job creation that results from the Marcellus shale.
 - *Preparing Pennsylvanians for health careers.* The health sector is projected to have among the highest employment growth rates in the coming years, and Onorato will emphasize a multi-pronged strategy for meeting the demand that includes ensuring adequate capacity for education and training and addressing the needs of workers in the health fields – including by establishing a Consumer Workforce Council for direct care workers. He will also continue the work of the Center for Health Careers.
 - *Increasing Industry Partnerships in targeted sectors.* Industry Partnerships are a valuable component of the state’s workforce development system that bring together management and labor from businesses in a specific sector and identify and then meet their shared workforce needs. Onorato will expand this program to reach additional high-priority and high-growth firms and sectors of the economy, with an emphasis on energy production and conservation and on manufacturing.
 - *Ensuring that workforce gaps are filled as retirements occur.* The oldest Baby Boomers will turn 65 next year, and Onorato will match projected retirements in skilled professions to workforce development opportunities for incoming workers.
 - *Preparing Pennsylvanians for Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) careers.* Onorato’s Higher Education Policy Paper includes a detailed plan to increase the number of Pennsylvanians prepared for reliable well-paying STEM fields, including specific attention to students who are the first in their family to attend college and groups traditionally under-represented in the STEM professions, including women, African-Americans and Latinos.
- **Strengthen the state’s education and training systems – and their links to regional employers.** Onorato’s comprehensive strategy for education and training – much of which was included in his Higher Education Policy Paper or will be described in his upcoming PreK-12 Education Policy Paper – includes:
 - *Continuing to implement the Legislature’s Costing-Out Report so that students are prepared for the workforce.* Onorato supports continued funding of the Costing-Out Report and accountability for how the new resources are invested in preparing students for success after graduation.
 - *Strengthening links between employers and students.* Onorato will expand career education programs that begin in the middle grades and provide students with the ability to explore future workforce opportunities and to understand the

educational skills they will need to develop in order to pursue their areas of interest.

- *Improving Career and Technical Education for high school students and adults.* Many high-demand jobs require industry certification without the immediate need for a college degree. Onorato will expand high-quality vocational programs that prepare students for these high-skill fields in sectors with strong regional demand.
- *Building on the power of Pennsylvania's community colleges.* Onorato will create a Pennsylvania Community College Coordinating Board to strengthen the formal bonds of the Commonwealth's 14 community colleges while still respecting their autonomy and entrepreneurship, and he will make the community college funding formula more responsive to industry needs. In addition – because many Pennsylvanians do not have access to a nearby community college – Onorato will increase rural access to workforce certification and associate degree programs by creating affordable satellite community college campuses in rural and other under-served areas – including through the use of online courses, distance learning and blended programs – with the goal of having a community college or equivalent educational opportunity within a one-hour drive of as many Pennsylvanians as possible.
- *Helping adults who are trying to earn their degrees.* Onorato will double the percent of adults with only a high school diploma who are pursuing college degrees: from 3.8% to 7.6% of working-age Pennsylvanians. To achieve this goal, Onorato supports launching an Adult Learning Initiative that provides college credit for applied learning, is flexible with when and where courses are scheduled, and ensures access to adequate financial aid – which requires fixing the state's tuition grant program so that it works for adults.
- **Address the needs of low-income Pennsylvanians trying to access the labor market.** Low-income working families sometimes need additional supports in order to succeed in the workforce. Onorato supports:
 - *Creating a state Earned Income Tax Credit.* A state EITC will promote economic security and encourage workforce participation for low-income Pennsylvanians. The timing and scope of the refundable state EITC will depend on economic conditions and available funding.
 - *Increasing job access for working families.* Onorato will encourage work sites to be conducive to all employees, including by promoting the availability of quality nearby child care, flexible scheduling and paid sick leave.

DAN ONORATO: MAKING ECONOMIC GROWTH PENNSYLVANIA'S NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

Dan Onorato will focus on the needs of Pennsylvania's businesses and workers from Day One. As Governor, Onorato will make the Commonwealth the national leader in next-generation job creation – encouraging businesses creation and expansion that puts Pennsylvanians back to work and leverages the full potential of Pennsylvania's enormous resources.



The Onorato Plan to Reform Pennsylvania's Government *Delivering the Honest, Accountable Government Pennsylvanians Deserve*

As Harrisburg has been wracked by controversies, petty fights and general dysfunction, Pennsylvanians have lost confidence that state government is looking out for the well-being of our residents and taxpayers. Especially during these tough economic times, citizens need to know that *their* government is operating with one goal in mind: to advance the public interest, not the power of special interests.

Dan Onorato will bring real reform to Harrisburg. By making government work better and ensuring that it operates on behalf of Pennsylvanians, Onorato will not only restore public confidence but also eliminate the entrenched political barriers to ambitious policies that will create jobs, protect working families, improve our schools and preserve our environment. Enacting these reforms will make our government more accountable, and it will also make our political system more accessible and increase the diversity of those who represent us.

A Proven Track Record as a Reformer

As County Executive, Onorato enacted bold reforms that took on more than 200 years of patronage-laden inefficiency in county government. With strong leadership from Onorato, voters overwhelmingly approved the elimination of six unnecessary elected positions. The result of this and other smart government reforms like merging five 9-1-1 call centers into a single system is that taxpayers have saved over \$21 million, public services are better, and residents can count on far more transparency and accountability in government operations.

And Onorato has kept up the momentum for reform in Allegheny County. He has fought to take money out of politics by proposing first-ever campaign contribution limits for individuals and political action committees seeking to influence elections in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. While urging County Council to enact his comprehensive campaign finance reform, Onorato used his executive authority to order that all county, municipal and school district candidate and political committee finance reports be posted on the Internet within 72 hours of the filing deadline.

Throughout the campaign, Dan Onorato will describe his plans to make government work better on behalf of the citizens it is designed to serve – from local government reforms like municipal consolidation to increasing efficiency and fiscal responsibility at the state level. But the fundamental building block for these and all other policy changes is a simple one: Pennsylvanians must have faith in their government.

A Commitment to Effective, Accountable Government

Skeptics are likely to question whether these policies can ever become law, since many have been in the public arena for years and have failed to win passage. The answer is simple: Governors set priorities and they build their agenda around the issues they believe are most important. Government reform is a priority for Dan Onorato – and he has the track record to prove it.

Onorato will bring his proven commitment to reform to Harrisburg, and he will fight for reform so that the people of Pennsylvania have confidence that their government is working on behalf of their interests in improving the economy and creating new jobs, ensuring access to affordable health care, guaranteeing access to quality schools from pre-kindergarten to higher education, and promoting sustainable environmental and advanced energy policies.

Curbing the Power of Special Interests

Dan Onorato will shift the balance of power in Harrisburg back to where it belongs: in the hands of the working families and job creators across the Commonwealth that he is running to represent. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Enact tough campaign finance limits – and enforce them.** This is the single most important reform in Pennsylvania government. In the last five years alone, Pennsylvania candidates and political parties collected nearly four hundred million dollars in campaign contributions. Only three states had more money influencing politics than Pennsylvania in 2008. It is a national embarrassment that Pennsylvania is one of just 12 states that fail to limit campaign contributions, and it creates a perception of impropriety that makes government seem even more unaccountable to the state’s residents. Onorato believes that Pennsylvania should:
 - Enact contribution limits consistent with federal rules for individuals giving to a candidate, political party committee or other political action committee (PAC);
 - Enact contribution limits consistent with federal rules for political party committees and other PACs making donations to candidates and to other committees;
 - Enact aggregate limits on total contributions by an individual in any election cycle consistent with federal limits, and subject political party committees and other PACs to aggregate limits;
 - Enact limits on contributions to so-called “527” organizations that play a role in state elections consistent with limits on contributions to PACs;
 - Include a “millionaire’s provision” so that contribution limits for all candidates are automatically raised by a reasonable amount in the event that any candidate uses his or her personal wealth to seek to influence the outcome of an election;
 - Require contributors to list their occupation and employer for all donations over \$100 – compared to \$250 under current law – and make contribution reports available to the public as quickly as possible; and
 - Improve enforcement by increasing the late filing fee on campaign finance reports from \$10 per day to \$100 per day; eliminate all current limits on total late filing fees; and provide adequate funding to initiate investigations and ensure compliance with the state’s campaign finance law.

- **Implement a total ban on free gifts, meals, tickets, travel, entertainment and other perks.** On his first day as Governor, Onorato will sign an Executive Order prohibiting any appointed official from accepting a free meal, gift, entertainment, travel or other hospitality from registered lobbyists and groups or individuals with business before the Administration. Onorato will also call for the Legislature to immediately turn this gift ban into law, and to ensure that it covers Executive Branch appointees and members and staff of the General Assembly.
- **Strengthen the lobbying law to increase confidence in how public officials are making key decisions.** In 2006, Pennsylvania became the last state in the nation to enact a lobbyist disclosure law. But even that overdue legislation is insufficient at protecting the public interest. Every lobbyist should be required to disclose which Executive Branch offices or agencies and members of the Legislature they lobby, detailed by individual legislation or regulation and client they lobby on behalf of and released in a timely manner to provide full transparency. In addition:
 - Lobbying expenditure reports should be itemized issue by issue; and
 - The trigger for being subject to the law should be dramatically lowered from the equivalent of \$10,000 per year to \$4,000 per year – or \$1,000 each quarter – which will ensure the public has access to critical information while still protecting charities and non-profits that may engage in very minimal lobbying.
- **End the “revolving door” of state government employment.** Current law prohibits legislators and Executive Branch appointees from lobbying the office in which they served for one year after leaving government. Onorato wants to close the revolving door loopholes that enable former officials to maintain their influence in ways that fall just short of lobbying or that include lobbying agencies or branches other than the specific one in which they served. Onorato’s plan calls for a two year “cooling off period” where former public officials cannot engage on behalf of an industry in matters that they regulated while serving in state government.
- **Improve access to voting so that more citizens can participate in the political process.** The ultimate expression of political power is made at the ballot box. Pennsylvanians should have every opportunity to vote while rigorously maintaining the integrity and security of the electoral process. The majority of states allow voters to cast “no excuse” absentee ballots – such as California, New Jersey, Florida and Ohio – while in Pennsylvania a resident can only vote by absentee ballot if they meet specific criteria set out in the law. Onorato supports expanding Pennsylvania law to allow “no excuse” absentee ballots to increase voter participation while protecting the security of the voting process.

Cleaning Up the Legislature

Dan Onorato will fight for the tough reforms needed to restore public trust in the General Assembly. The simple truth is that an array of scandals and allegations of back-room dealing have created the perception that the Legislature is out of touch from the average Pennsylvanian. Onorato will fix the system to bring back faith in the Commonwealth’s law-making body.

As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Prohibit legislators from raising their own pay ever again.** Pennsylvania legislators have the fourth-highest salaries in the nation, totaling nearly \$25 million last year. Pennsylvania needs an independent Citizens Compensation Commission – appointed to fixed terms, with broad public representation – to be given the sole authority to set legislative pay as well as salaries for other elected officials.
- **End Harrisburg’s culture of perks.** The Pennsylvania Constitution says clearly that: “The members of the General Assembly shall receive such salary and mileage for regular and special sessions as shall be fixed by law, *and no other compensation whatever....*” Onorato supports legislation eliminating per diems – which is money given to legislators in addition to their salary for each day they show up for work, with no need for receipts or other documented expenses – as well as all other perks beyond the two types of compensation specified in the Constitution: salary and mileage reimbursement, which should be calculated using the IRS’s standard rules. Legislators should only be able to use a state-owned vehicle if it is less expensive for taxpayers than paying for mileage reimbursements. In addition, legislators should pay a reasonable share of the cost of their health care benefits, and perks including free cell phones should be eliminated.
- **Enact term limits for Senators and members of the House of Representatives.** The power of incumbency is seen as one of the biggest impediments to a more accountable and responsive government. Onorato supports a Constitutional amendment to institute a 12-year limit on the amount of time a legislator can serve in each chamber. Fifteen other states have pursued this approach, and it is time for Pennsylvania to do the same.
- **Cut the size of the Legislature.** In a year of national recession where the state faced billions of dollars of budget cuts, the General Assembly still decided to spend just under \$300 million on its own operations – which is more state funding than it appropriated for the entire Pennsylvania Department of Health. In order to save money for the Commonwealth’s taxpayers and to increase the efficiency of state government, Onorato is calling for a Constitutional amendment to shrink the State Senate and House of Representatives in a manner that still preserves adequate representation for citizens, particularly in rural areas. Several legislators have taken the lead on this issue, and their bills should serve as the starting point for defining appropriately sized legislative districts. Any plan to reduce the size of the Legislature should cut the cost of running the General Assembly by no less than 20% and should go into effect following the Census subsequent to enactment so that it can be implemented to complement mandatory redistricting and without added costs to taxpayers.
- **Eliminate the General Assembly’s slush fund.** The Legislature is holding onto a surplus fund that stood at over \$200 million the last time they provided information to the public, and probably remains at well over \$100 million today. Onorato supports using the surplus for the public interest through the transparent appropriation process.
- **Increase competition in legislative races.** True competition is the heart of representative democracy. Yet Pennsylvania has the reputation as “one of the most gerrymandered states in the nation,” where the process for drawing legislative districts protects incumbents and stifles the kind of tough races that give voters real

choice. Despite the best efforts of a few reformers, Pennsylvania's elected officials refused to make redistricting reform a priority and it is now too late to impact the way districts are drawn after the 2010 Census. But that is no excuse to delay reform – especially because the process for amending the Constitution takes at least two terms of the Legislature to complete. Onorato supports a Constitutional amendment that establishes an independent commission tasked with drawing compact and contiguous districts for State House and State Senate races, with no political consideration and operating fully in public.

Improving Accountability and Transparency in State Government

Dan Onorato believes that sunlight is the best disinfectant for government. His record as Allegheny County Executive is one of effectiveness, transparency and accountability.

As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Fix the state budget process – and withhold elected officials' pay if they can't pass the budget on time.** In each of the last seven years, Pennsylvania has failed to fully enact a state budget before the July 1 deadline. In fact, even on the day that this policy paper was released, the Commonwealth had not yet completed the budget process for 2009-10 – a fiscal year that is already four-and-a-half months underway. While there are real policy differences at the heart of every budget debate, there is no need for the process to continue into a new fiscal year. Future policy papers will describe how Onorato will propose budgets that ensure the effective use of every taxpayer dollar. And to promote a more efficient and transparent budget process, Onorato will call for a state law establishing the following timeline following the Governor's release of the Executive Budget:
 - By May 15, each chamber must pass its own version of the budget;
 - By June 15, the budget for the fiscal year that is just over two weeks away must be on the Governor's desk; and
 - Starting on July 1, for every day that a full budget has not been signed into law, the Governor and every member of the Legislature will have a day's worth of pay permanently withheld. In addition, beginning July 1, all members of the General Assembly will be required to appear in Harrisburg for legislative session seven days a week until a budget has been enacted into law.
- **Eliminate WAMs.** Walking Around Money – or WAMs – are a symbol of public disgust with Harrisburg. While these funds are often used for libraries, non-profit organizations, schools and similar purposes, Onorato will ban WAMs because they have no transparency and are seen as a way of rewarding legislators for voting a certain way. Through the regular and capital budget process, the General Assembly already has the authority to appropriate funds in a manner that legislators believe is best for Pennsylvania and meets local needs – and those appropriations are subject to full public view. There is no excuse for WAMs.
- **Give the public full access to how taxpayer dollars are spent.** In Texas, Missouri and other states across the country, constituents can use the Internet to see every detail in how the state spends their money. Pennsylvanians deserve no less. Onorato will create a fully searchable, publicly accessible Internet database on all state

- spending, including all vendors and the salaries of public officials. PennPIRG has called this reform “a powerful tool for the media and independent watchdogs to identify sweetheart contracts, influence peddling, favoritism, and waste.”
- **Remove the perception of “pay-to-play” from public contracting by ending “sole source” contracts.** Contracts issued by the Commonwealth should always be awarded through a competitive process to the firm that can provide quality goods or services at the lowest price to taxpayers except in the instance of a disaster. For professional services like financial and legal expertise and information technology, Onorato will ensure complete transparency in how vendors are selected when simple lowest-dollar bidding is not appropriate due to the complexity of the services involved. Onorato will also follow the spirit as well as the letter of the law by avoiding the piggy-backing of new tasks onto existing contracts – which reduces competition and leaves the public without full and timely access to information.
 - **Prevent fraud and abuse.** To ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent appropriately and that publicly funded programs are operating as required by law, Onorato supports a stronger Office of the Inspector General with specific program audit responsibilities to ensure that taxpayer dollars are getting the desired results. Onorato will call for a reform plan modeled on Florida, where in addition to a Chief Inspector General there is an Inspector General inside each agency whose responsibility is to provide independent assessments to the head of the department and to prevent and detect waste, fraud and abuse in that agency’s operations. Under Onorato’s plan, annual performance audits will provide policy-makers and the public with detailed information about which programs are working and which are not in order to make informed budget decisions.
 - **Expand the pipeline to encourage more diverse, representative leadership.** Onorato wants to ensure that the views and experiences of all Pennsylvanians are represented in the decision-making process. For example, only four states have a smaller proportion of women legislators. And while African-American and Latino Pennsylvanians make up nearly 16% of the state population, they constitute less than 8% of the members of the General Assembly. As Allegheny County Executive, Onorato signed the Fair Representation Executive Order, increasing transparency in appointments to boards, commissions and authorities by taking the application process out from behind closed doors. If elected Governor, Onorato will expand the pipeline for political leadership by reaching beyond the normal pathways to power in the appointments that he makes to agency management positions, boards and commissions – which are often a stepping stone to future elected office and other leadership opportunities – and by consulting with stakeholder groups on strategies to increase participation.
 - **Strengthen the Sunshine Act.** Pennsylvania’s Sunshine law is designed to give taxpayers access to where and how decisions are made at all levels of government. But the penalties for violating this essential law are woefully inadequate. As Governor, Onorato will call for increasing the top fine for violating the law from \$100 to \$500, increasing each year by the rate of inflation, and will create a state-level office to review potential violations and hear appeals.

DAN ONORATO: A COMMITMENT TO EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT

With Onorato as Governor, reform starts on Day 1. On his first day in office, Onorato will issue Executive Orders to implement the parts of his reform agenda that can be started without legislative action:

- Implementing the ban on free gifts, meals, tickets, travel, entertainment and other perks for Executive Branch officials
- Strengthening lobbyist disclosure requirements for Executive Branch officials
- Ending the “revolving door” for Executive Branch officials who leave office
- Giving the public full access to how taxpayer dollars are spent
- Removing any perception of “pay-to-play” from public contracts
- Preventing fraud and abuse by strengthening the Office of Inspector General
- Expanding the pipeline to ensure more diverse, representative leadership

Dan Onorato will immediately get to work crafting laws that enshrine these elements of reform and build on their momentum to implement the rest of his reform agenda through the legislative process.



The Onorato Plan for Higher Education

Putting Pennsylvanians Back To Work & Growing Our Economy

Jump-starting Pennsylvania's economy is "Job Number One" for the Commonwealth's next Governor and Dan Onorato will enter office with an ambitious strategy to use the state's wealth of colleges and universities as a source of job creation and economic innovation and to create the highly prepared, well-trained workforce that the 21st century economy demands.

With 263 degree-granting institutions of higher education and branch campuses, Pennsylvania is fortunate to have more colleges and universities than any state in the nation except California and New York. Pennsylvania also boasts a rich mix of community colleges, public universities in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, public state-related universities that are also world-class academic and research centers, and a robust set of private colleges and universities that attract students and faculty from across the nation and beyond. These institutions are regional economic anchors and engines: they are responsible for hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of annual economic activity, and they provide the Commonwealth with a competitive advantage in creating the new products and jobs of the global Innovation Economy.

Now more than ever, access to higher education is essential to the economic security of Pennsylvania families. During the current national recession, the unemployment rate for adults with no formal education beyond high school has been roughly *double* the unemployment rate of those with a college degree. The importance of higher education is expected to increase as the economy recovers; a report this summer by the President's Council of Economic Advisors emphasized that "occupations requiring higher educational attainment are projected to grow much faster than those with lower education requirements...." A college education also means significantly higher wages for working families – over 60% greater lifetime earnings than for those with a high school diploma.

But Pennsylvania faces significant challenges of access and affordability in achieving the education levels that Commonwealth residents need for economic success. Pennsylvania received an "F" for college affordability on the most recent National Report Card on Higher Education, and a report released just last week revealed that students graduate from Pennsylvania colleges and universities with the seventh highest level of debt in the nation. Rural access remains a major problem for workforce certification and affordable two-year degree programs. In addition, the pipeline from high school to college needs to be strengthened, with fewer than half of Pennsylvania ninth graders enrolling in college by the time they turn 19. For example, Pennsylvania falls below the national average in the number of students taking Advanced

Placement courses – which prepare students for college material and enable them to earn college credit – and minority students in Pennsylvania are especially unlikely to have access to AP courses.

To meet these challenges, Dan Onorato will align the academic, economic and entrepreneurial power of our institutions of higher education with the needs of our current and future workforce and today's and tomorrow's employers.

A Proven Track Record

Dan Onorato's record of economic development success as Executive of Pennsylvania's second-largest county was forged in close partnership with the region's colleges and universities. Onorato worked with the Community College of Allegheny County to launch job-training programs to prepare the region's residents for the green economy, health careers and other emerging sectors, and created the Allegheny County-CCAC Workforce Alliance to expand workforce development programs and make them more responsive to the needs of employers. In addition, Onorato has first-hand experience working with colleges and universities to attract new companies to the region, to ensure that start-ups have the room and resources to grow and to use the fruits of university research to improve the lives of the region's residents.

A Vision for Pennsylvania's Future

As Governor, Dan Onorato will get Pennsylvanians back to work in jobs with solid wages, prepare the next-generation workforce for the economy that awaits them and improve the Commonwealth's capacity to leverage the power of higher education institutions to spur new inventions, companies and jobs while attracting the leading innovators in energy, health care and other growing sectors of the economy to do business in Pennsylvania. To achieve these goals, Onorato will:

- Improve the ability of colleges and universities to be engines of economic recovery and long-term economic growth;
- Enable more Pennsylvanians to get well-paying jobs in the high-skills economy by increasing the number of degrees awarded to the state's residents by 25,700 over the next 4 years – a 6% increase; and
- Increase Pennsylvania's competitiveness with a focus on high-demand and emerging sectors of the economy.

Improving the Ability of Colleges and Universities to be Engines of Economic Recovery and Long-Term Economic Growth

In addition to their academic missions, colleges and universities are community anchors and job generators. They foster research and innovative technologies, which in turn provide the impetus for new companies and higher employment. Unlocking the job creation potential of Pennsylvania's colleges and universities in high-tech and emerging fields is essential to keeping our most talented graduates in-state and to increasing Pennsylvania's overall competitiveness. Dan Onorato will assist Pennsylvania's colleges and universities in boosting their economic development role in today's Innovation Economy. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Create new jobs by increasing Pennsylvania’s standing as a global research leader.** To achieve this goal, Onorato supports:
 - *Creating new jobs in emerging sectors of the economy by increasing federal research grants.* Onorato will set a target to establish a \$25 million per year competitive funding pool within four years to serve as a match for federal research grants, with a focus on energy, technology and health care. The state match will increase Pennsylvania public and private colleges’ and universities’ chances of winning federal funds, and will boost the level of federal research dollars being invested in the Commonwealth. Onorato will also be a personal force in Washington to advance Pennsylvania’s research agenda.
 - *Increasing the number and scope of Keystone Innovation Zone Starter Kits.* Onorato supports this initiative to help colleges and universities attract top faculty researchers in fields like nanotechnology and energy – which leads to new products and economic opportunity. Onorato will focus these Kits on projects that demonstrate unquestioned academic leadership in targeted high-growth fields and that show strength in engaging with industry to use the faculty as catalysts for new business creation and company attraction.
 - *Providing state capital funding to increase research and academic capacity.* Capital funding from the state enables colleges and universities to create immediate construction jobs and to attract world-class faculty and external research funds. Onorato will double capital funding for the state-related universities and community colleges from their FY2008-09 levels and maintain the newly doubled capital funding level for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. In addition, Onorato will support the efforts of private colleges and universities to receive sufficient Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) funds, and will work to streamline the process of seeking these resources wherever possible.
- **Implement an aggressive strategy to transform research into new jobs.** To achieve this goal, Onorato supports:
 - *Creating and protecting jobs by encouraging industry-sponsored research.* Onorato will set a target to establish a \$25 million per year competitive funding pool within four years to serve as a match for industry-sponsored research at public and private Pennsylvania colleges and universities. Modeled on other states’ successful efforts to keep jobs in-state by helping companies adopt new technologies, this initiative will improve the competitiveness of Pennsylvania firms – with an emphasis on manufacturing jobs – and address the emerging needs of Marcellus shale development.
 - *Strengthening entrepreneurship at research institutions.* Onorato will create the “Pennsylvania 100”: 100 Entrepreneurs-in-Residence in the most promising research labs in the Commonwealth, with the aim of doubling the number of university-based start-ups in Pennsylvania. He will also ensure that these start-ups access the technical assistance of the state-funded Regional Export Networks in order to help achieve their export potential.
 - *Increasing support for Ben Franklin Partners and the Greenhouses.* These organizations have been essential partners of state government in working with new start-up businesses in critical sectors of the economy, and Onorato supports their growth.

- *Encouraging university spin-offs by supporting access to capital.* Onorato will work with the higher education and business communities to ensure that the Small Business First loan program meets the working capital needs of start-ups and early stage companies being created as spin-offs from colleges and universities. He will also support and expand the Pennsylvania Angel Investor Network that links early stage capital to innovative new companies, and will make sure that the Pennsylvania Venture Capital Program is adequately funded.
- *Supporting the growth of new companies through the Research & Development Tax Credit.* To provide financial incentives for new technology-based companies, Onorato supports restoration of the temporary cuts to the Research & Development Tax Credit that were enacted as part of the FY2009-10 budget, if possible based on economic conditions.
- *Establishing Regional Centers for Engineering Innovation.* Just as Penn State's Agricultural Extension Program applies the university's academic expertise to practical problem-solving that increases profitability and spurs job creation in agriculture industries, the Regional Centers for Engineering Innovation would achieve a similar goal in the engineering field, with an emphasis on the state's manufacturers. Within the statewide program, public and private universities in each region would work with private sector businesses and economic and workforce development organizations to support the development and marketing of engineering-related products and services through new businesses and expansion of existing companies. Onorato supports state funding to help launch and support this initiative in order to create more jobs and keep Pennsylvania college graduates from leaving the state.

Enabling More Pennsylvanians to Get Well-Paying Jobs in the High-Skills Economy

Significantly increasing the proportion of Pennsylvanians with a workforce certificate or college degree will mean more jobs, higher wages, a more attractive business environment and greater overall economic prosperity.

Right now, just over 1 in 3 Pennsylvania adults have an associate or bachelor's degree – lower than the national average and worse than four of our six neighboring states. This summer, President Obama launched the “American Graduation Initiative,” declaring that the nation's competitiveness depends on dramatically improving the proportion of students who pursue higher education. To have the world's most educated workforce by 2025, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems estimates that Pennsylvania needs to produce an additional 25,700 graduates over the next four years – a 6% increase – as the first step in achieving that goal.

Dan Onorato will lead Pennsylvania in meeting the target of at least 25,700 additional degrees over the next four years. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Help adults who are trying to earn their degrees.** One and a half million Pennsylvania adults have earned some college credit but did not complete a degree, and many more entered the workforce immediately after high school without the opportunity to pursue higher education. Onorato will double the percent of adults with only a high school diploma who are pursuing college degrees: from 3.8% to 7.6% of working-age Pennsylvanians. To achieve this goal, Onorato supports:

- *Launching an Adult Learning Initiative.* Pennsylvania will build on other states' successful programs which focus on three strategies: providing college credit for applied learning, being more flexible with when and where courses are scheduled, and ensuring access to adequate financial aid. Onorato will convene higher education, workforce development and civic leaders to seek their assistance in developing a model that works for Pennsylvania, and he will call on all public colleges and universities to designate an Adult Learner Advocate to focus on adults who already have a significant number of credits but are just short of completing their degree – with specific annual enrollment targets and public reporting of data.
- *Fixing the state's tuition grant program so that it works for adults.* Onorato supports changing the rules that make it hard for adult students to receive tuition grants from the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) – most importantly, by extending the application deadline for community college students to better match when they typically enroll and by covering more part-time students. For adults who still would not qualify for traditional grants, Onorato will create a dedicated tuition grant program for older, independent students with financial need – with a target of \$20 million annual funding within four years.
- **Make college more affordable for all students.** Onorato supports:
 - *Providing stable and predictable funding to colleges and universities.* Onorato will ensure that all sectors of higher education are treated fairly in the budget process and receive reasonable funding increases as the economy grows so that college is affordable for Pennsylvania families. In addition, the state's FY2009-10 budget forces public colleges and universities to rely on federal stimulus funding that will disappear in two years, and it cuts grants to private institutions that accept students who have state tuition grants by nearly 30%. Onorato will work to restore these cuts and he will prevent the federal funding “cliff.”
 - *Making sure that every family can afford college – without crushing levels of debt.* Right now the average PHEAA grant is just under \$2,800 and the maximum grant, at the most expensive universities, is \$4,120. Onorato is a strong supporter of families being able to use their PHEAA grant at whatever institution they choose to attend. With that principle in mind, the state needs to increase investment in the tuition grant program so that the grants go further. Onorato's goal is that within four years the maximum grant will fully cover the cost of tuition at the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education for the families with the greatest financial need, while still being able to be used at any community college, state-related university or private college or university. This increased state aid package represents a target of \$400 million additional investment in Pennsylvania's future workforce over the next four years, while the timing and scale of implementation will depend on the Commonwealth's economic growth and budget situation. Onorato will also seek to build on the success of the “Pittsburgh Promise” scholarship program by leading a campaign to help other regions raise private-sector and foundation funds to fill the funding gap for families trying to send their children to college.

- *Reforming PHEAA so that more money is available for student grants.* While PHEAA has made some improvements after years of well-chronicled abuse of taxpayer dollars, Onorato believes that permanent reform is essential to bring accountability and transparency to the agency so that every available dollar is being used for one purpose: making college more affordable for Pennsylvania students. Onorato will call for legislation that:
 - Cuts the size of the PHEAA board at least from 20 members to 11: the Secretaries of Education, Community & Economic Development, Labor & Industry, and Banking; one appointee from each legislative caucus; and three independent members with expertise in higher education access and affordability and the private sector who are not affiliated with any individual college or university. Appointed board members would be limited to serving two terms.
 - Bans spending on employee bonuses, board and staff retreats, and event sponsorship and advertising not essential to PHEAA's statutory responsibilities.
 - Requires detailed annual reports on the agency's operational spending, including the salaries of all PHEAA executives and delineation of travel expenditures over \$50.
 - Requires any foundation operated by PHEAA to be subject to the same board structure, spending limits, accountability and transparency.
- *Fight for adequate federal funding of student financial aid.* The federal stimulus is providing over \$260 million in additional Pell grants and \$11 million in new work-study funding to students attending Pennsylvania colleges this year. Onorato will work with the state's Congressional delegation to preserve this assistance by permanently increasing the maximum Pell grant and tying it to inflation.
- *End the "double tuition tax" on community college students.* Right now, families who live in municipalities or school districts that do not "sponsor" a community college are forced to pay double tuition. Nearly one in four community college students pay this double tuition, and students who enroll in 2-year degree programs at state-related university satellite or branch campuses also pay higher tuition rates than at community colleges. Onorato will create a tax credit program for businesses that make multi-year commitments to new "local share" funding partnerships; the business contribution would need to be matched by foundation, non-profit, local government or other private sector funds, and all of the money would be used to reduce tuition dollar-for-dollar at the community college or, in parts of the state that do not have a community college, state-related satellite or branch campuses that agree to participate.
- *Bring down the cost of textbooks.* Families can spend an average of \$1,000 a year paying just for students' textbooks and course materials. Recent federal law and legislation that is before the State Senate are designed to reduce the cost of buying books and includes pilot textbook rental programs. Onorato will urge Pennsylvania institutions of higher education to develop textbook rental programs – saving families money while respecting the right of faculty members to choose the right texts for their courses – and to explore increased use of the Internet for classroom materials and textbook access.

- *Continue to make the State System more cost-efficient.* Onorato will encourage the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to improve energy efficiency and boost efforts to share services where possible, in order to keep tuition increases to a minimum and increase academic investment.
- **Increase rural access to workforce certification and associate degree programs.** A recent national report found that all or parts of 29 Pennsylvania counties have “critical” or “most critical” education needs. In many of these counties, there is no community college or affordable 2-year alternative for students to turn to. Onorato will create affordable satellite community college campuses in rural and other underserved areas – including through the use of online courses, distance learning and blended programs – with the goal of having a community college or equivalent educational opportunity within a one-hour drive of as many Pennsylvanians as possible. To help achieve this goal, Onorato will launch a competitive bid process to solicit proposals from community colleges, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, the four state-related universities and private colleges and universities who are willing to offer certification programs with college-level credit and 2-year degrees in targeted regions. Students will pay the average cost of tuition for sponsored community college students and state funds will fill any gap. The program will not spend a single taxpayer dollar on capital costs; instead, existing taxpayer-owned space such as school districts, vocational schools and Intermediate Units will be used, particularly during evenings and weekends for would-be students who work during the day.
- **Increase access to adult vocational-education programs that prepare students for high-demand jobs in the trades.** Onorato will support expansion of adult Career and Technical Education programs that award industry-based certifications with college-level credit and of trade programs that prepare Pennsylvanians for well-paying skilled jobs.
- **Improve the chances for success of students who enroll in college.** Students who are the first in their family to attend college or who come from low-income backgrounds are less likely than their peers to complete their college degree. To ensure that the specific needs of these students and their families are met, Onorato supports:
 - *Making better use of data to highlight successful programs.* Onorato will call for the collection and reporting of each college and university’s retention and graduation data through a streamlined data system, developed in partnership with institutions of higher education, which is linked to school district and workforce information and is used to identify best practices that are getting results for students who face the greatest challenges.
 - *Providing incentives for innovation.* Onorato will create a \$5 million Challenge Grant fund for colleges and universities that implement innovative support programs to keep students on track to graduation, in order to determine what strategies are most effective.
 - *Providing incentives for success.* Onorato will create a \$10 million Excellence Grant pot for improvements and ongoing success in first-year retention rates, graduation rates, post-graduation placement in the workforce and other indicators for all higher education sectors.

- *Transfer of credits from one higher education institution to another.* Onorato supports the existing framework that makes it possible for students to take their credits with them as they move from community colleges to the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, the state-related universities, and private colleges and universities that choose to participate.
- **Expand the pipeline from high school to college.** Pennsylvania’s economic future demands that a far greater proportion of high school freshmen earn their diploma and receive a workforce certification or college degree. In addition to other initiatives that will be detailed in his forthcoming PreK-12 Education Position Paper, Onorato will:
 - *Launch a state-led public-private partnership education and marketing campaign* that learns from and supports the success of initiatives like Project GRAD to educate middle school students and their parents about career opportunities and what courses and other steps students need to take throughout high school in order to attend and afford college.
 - *Make it easier for families to apply for financial aid.* Completing the required federal financial aid form, called the FAFSA, is a major barrier to high school seniors enrolling in college – especially for students whose parents do not have a college degree. A recent study found that using tax information to fill in parts of the form and helping parents complete the rest of the form increased students’ college enrollment rates by 30% and reduced the time it takes parents to complete the form from 13 *hours* to less than 10 *minutes*. Onorato will seek foundation and private funds and work with the Department of Revenue, tax preparation firms and other partners so that Pennsylvania becomes the first state in the nation where, while preserving personal information security, as much of the FAFSA as possible is automatically filled out for families that give their permission.
 - *Expand programs that increase college-going.* Onorato will ensure that school districts are using a portion of the additional state investment from continued implementation of the Legislature’s Costing-Out Report to:
 - Increase the number of students taking Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses, which enable students to earn college credit at many institutions, so that every school district receiving a significant funding increase from the state offers at least one AP or IB course in English, math, science and social studies in each high school.
 - Fund courses like art, music and foreign languages, as well as extra-curricular activities, which increase student engagement and enable students to develop a range of interests.
 - Ensure that schools have adequate and well-trained staff to help students enroll in rigorous coursework, apply to and visit colleges, access financial aid, and engage community and corporate support.
 - Fund partnerships with area colleges and universities that include interactions between professors and high school students and campus visits by the high school students.
 - Address the needs of out-of-school-youth and students at risk of dropping out by ensuring that every region has Early College High Schools, Middle College High Schools and/or Gateway to College programs – which are partnerships between school districts and colleges designed to educate students who do not succeed in the traditional high school environment.

Increasing Pennsylvania's Competitiveness in High-Demand and Emerging Sectors of the Economy

In addition to ensuring the overall preparedness of Pennsylvania's workforce by increasing the number of Commonwealth residents with post-secondary certifications and degrees, Dan Onorato will prioritize high-demand and emerging fields – attracting more businesses by increasing their confidence that Pennsylvania workers will be aligned with their needs, while putting more Pennsylvanians on a path to well-paying jobs that will not disappear. As Governor, Dan Onorato will:

- **Increase the number of Pennsylvanians who enter Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) fields through a new Premiere Public Partnership.** Pennsylvania's state-related universities already offer state-of-the-art undergraduate STEM degrees, drawing students from around the world. To build on the existing well-regarded Pennsylvania STEM Initiative, Onorato will partner with Penn State University, Temple University, the University of Pittsburgh and Lincoln University to make engineering, math and science programs that are not offered at the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education available to Commonwealth residents using existing and expanded capacity at the state-related universities. Students who qualify for financial aid will pay no more than the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education tuition rate, with the state filling the gap – which will reach approximately \$25 million a year by the time freshmen through seniors are enrolled. The program will be open to all Pennsylvanians, but as part of this initiative, the state-related universities will establish benchmarks and annual targets for increasing enrollment and supporting retention for academically prepared students who are the first in their family to attend college or who are part of groups traditionally under-represented in the STEM fields, including women, African-Americans and Latinos.
- **Provide incentives for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to continue expanding in high-demand fields.** The State System already has its own expertise in other STEM fields and critical sectors like health careers. Onorato will support the creation of Professional Science Masters Degree programs within the State System to train students for STEM jobs and will use a component of the State System's annual appropriation increase to serve as a financial incentive to create, expand and align programs that meet regional or statewide workforce needs.
- **Improve and expand the New Economy Technology Scholarship Program.** Onorato will consult with high-tech business leaders, higher education institutions and college students on how to improve the existing NETS program so that it serves as a more effective tool for encouraging college students to pursue STEM fields and to remain in Pennsylvania after they earn their degree. Onorato supports using a revitalized NETS program to focus in particular on STEM programs at private colleges and universities, while maintaining eligibility for all institutions of higher education.
- **Make the community college funding formula more responsive to industry needs.** Onorato will convene leaders of the community colleges, industries that rely on them for workforce development and organized labor to discuss how to continue improving the community college funding formula in order to incentivize industry partnerships.

- **Improve coordination of higher education and workforce development policies so that government and public services are more efficient and effective.** To achieve this goal, Onorato will:
 - *Create a “P-16 Coordinating Council.”* Many other states have established a similar framework to improve the alignment all the way from “P” (pre-kindergarten) through “16” (the shorthand for the four years that follow high school graduation after grade 12). Onorato supports a P-16 Coordinating Council in order to develop and implement long-term strategies with private-sector, civic, education and public-sector leaders, while respecting the institutional autonomy of colleges and universities, so that as the economy continues to change, Pennsylvania can get and stay ahead of the curve. In addition to addressing challenges associated with the pipeline to college education, Onorato will task the P-16 Coordinating Council with:
 - Creating a regional inventory of where students lack access to higher education and workforce training, and working with public and private higher education institutions to develop region-specific strategies to meet the needs.
 - Encouraging higher education institutions to be more responsive to labor market needs in addition to accomplishing their academic mission.
 - Creating regional voluntary consortia of public and private colleges and universities to meet specific regional workforce and education challenges, with a focus on emerging sectors of the economy.
 - *Create a Pennsylvania Community College Coordinating Board.* The Commonwealth’s 14 community colleges are vital partners for education and workforce development. Onorato supports strengthening their formal bonds while still respecting their autonomy and entrepreneurship. Establishing the PC3B will enable the community colleges to improve performance while also increasing efficiency in order to generate savings that can be reinvested in instruction and academic support. For example, the PC3B will make it possible to aggregate purchasing of common goods and services such as laboratory equipment, office supplies, copiers, library subscriptions and information technology. In collaboration with the new PC3B, Onorato will call on the community colleges to ensure that they are achieving three high-performance goals:
 - On an ongoing basis, aligning their curriculum, courses and programs with the needs of local and regional employers – including through establishing ways to receive input from businesses and organized labor on how the community college can respond to labor market needs.
 - Providing students with the support services that they need to be successful in completing their certificate or degree program, including bringing to scale promising programs that are already working.
 - Working with other higher education institutions to create successful pathways for students to earn a workforce credential, a 2-year degree and articulate into a 4-year degree.

DAN ONORATO: CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR WORKING FAMILIES AND ATTRACTING JOB-CREATING BUSINESSES

Dan Onorato will improve Pennsylvania's economy by taking advantage of the power of one of the Commonwealth's best resources: our institutions of higher education. Onorato's plan will create a better-prepared, economically secure workforce while ensuring that government is responsive to the workforce needs of employers and leveraging the innovations of colleges and universities into the jobs of Pennsylvania's future.